

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 16-23 and 26-28 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 16, 26, 27 and 28 are independent claims. Applicant respectfully requests reexamination and reconsideration.

The examiner uses Stockwell in combination with Navin-Chandra to reject claims 1, 8 and 28 as having been obvious.

Claim 1 recites "enumerating plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules." Neither Stockwell nor Navin-Chandra teach or suggest at least this quoted feature. The examiner argues that Stockwell discloses this quoted claim feature at col. 3, lines 25-30 and 35-50, and in the abstract. On the contrary, Stockwell is concerned merely with network security and processing automated connection requests written according to the rules of Internet Protocol (IP) in order to determine if the connection request has been granted. This is very different from enumerating plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules, which is concerned with search, namely processing user requests (e.g., keyword lists), to search data repositories and return results. Stockwell and applicant's claimed invention have very different domains, applications and technologies.

Navin-Chandra fails to make up for the deficiencies of Stockwell. Navin-Chandra does not teach or suggest enumerating plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules. Navin-Chandra does not enumerate plausible queries. On the contrary, Navin-Chandra merely re-ranks hits that match a received query. More specifically, in one embodiment, Navin-Chandra teaches:

The system and method of the present invention improve upon metasearch engine techniques by downloading the original documents (text or multimedia) identified by standard search engines as relevant and using the original content of each "hit" to re-rank them relative to each other according to the original query pattern for the search, providing a uniform ranking methodology for the user. (Col. 4, lines 18-24)

This is quite different from enumerating plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules. As stated above, Navin-Chandra merely teaches re-ranking.

One skilled in this art would not be led to Stockwell and Navin-Chandra because combining these two references would only lead to re-ranking connection requests and not enumerating plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules. Accordingly, claim 1 is not rendered obvious by Stockwell and Navin-Chandra.

Claims 8 and 28 recite "enumerate plausible queries of a target database using query generation rules," or similar language. For at least the reasons stated above with reference to claim 1, claims 8 and 28 are not rendered obvious by Stockwell and Navin-Chandra.

The examiner uses Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White to reject claims 2-7, 16-23 and 26-27 as having been obvious.

Claim 1 is not rendered obvious by Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White. Claims 2-7 depend upon, and further limit, claim 1. Accordingly, claims 2-7 are not rendered obvious by Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White.

Claim 16 recites "returning an associated teaser if the user query matches one of the selected queries."

Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White do not teach or suggest at least this quoted feature, either separately or in combination. Stockwell is concerned with network security and processing automated connection requests written according to the rules of Internet Protocol (IP) in order to determine if the connection request has been granted. Navin-Chandra re-ranks hits that match a received query. White teaches improvements to the database storage technology to generate more efficient indexes. i.e., White is concerned with a particular way to improve database efficiency by reorganizing the internal indexing structure. None of the references teach or suggest use of a teaser, as recited in applicant's claim. Among its advantages, as described in applicant's specification, applicant's method entails matching the user's query against an element in the database, and summarizing the best match found in a descriptive hyper linked test string, or teaser. Accordingly, claim 16 is not rendered obvious by Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White.

Claims 17, 26 and 27 recite "generating an associated teaser for each of the selected queries in conjunction with query-matching rules," or similar language. For at least the same

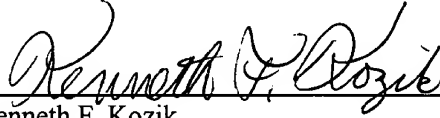
reasons described above with reference to claim 16, claims 17, 26 and 28 are not rendered obvious by Stockwell, Navin-Chandra and White.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 11, 2004

  
Kenneth F. Kozik  
Reg. No. 36,572

Fish & Richardson P.C.  
225 Franklin Street  
Boston, MA 02110-2804  
Telephone: (617) 542-5070  
Facsimile: (617) 542-8906